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increase spending in some areas, but also we constantly hear you got to decrease spending in other areas, and so when...when a budget cut like this is offered we took it. There's some other areas in the budget, Health and Human Services, we did not take, by the way, that were offered and probably would have been legitimate cuts, I'm thinking particularly in the area of child care and some other areas, that totaled several million dollars. We decided not to take those. So, this is one of those areas. And I...I don't have a magic answer to it, maybe I'm wandering around here a little bit, but I just say it's difficult to pinpoint where those cuts will be made, and we intended on monitoring it so that we're sure, a year from now, that we've got adequate services in place. So, this has been laid out on the table as long...it's been about three weeks ago. The last couple days is the first that I'd heard any remarks of the letters I think that you've gotten. Perhaps maybe it's been three or four working days; it's probably last week. But at this point, I'm satisfied that I think we can move ahead, not take this...not...not add this additional money at this point and be fairly assured via the administration that they will provide the care that's necessary in these particular areas and have them adequate. If not, we'll certainly look at it again in another year and I am interested in the discussion that Senator Schimek has. So, with that, I think I'll quit.

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. We are discussing the Schimek amendment, AM1719. Those wishing to address that amendment are Senators Connealy, Tyson, Hilgert, Janssen, Byars, and Schimek. Senator Connealy.

SENATOR CONNEALY: Thank you, Mr. President. I want to thank Senator Schimek for this amendment, at least for discussion purposes, and for her work in this area. We...we had a bill in front of the Business and Labor Committee that we heard during this session that would have created a separate bargaining unit for veterans' homes. We didn't pass that bill out, but we did encourage discussions with administration to work on this issue regarding the base pay and...and where...and the level of care in...in these veterans' homes. There's a significant problem,